The Semantic Discreteness of the Meaning of the Sentence in English

Prof. Lazim Al- Babawi

Irbid National University

D. Mohammad Ahmad Manasrah

Irbid National University

Abstract

It is quite clear that the main trend in modern Semitics differs from earlier ones, since the emphasis is clearly illustrated on descriptive semantics, this paper is an attempt to study the inner structure of the sentential meaning.

We believe that contemporary semantics is characterized by an obvious interest in relations between language function and human thinking. It is believed that human language is no longer regarded as a mere instrument for expressing thoughts. Human language is realized as a semantic influence by its own form. It shapes and predetermines human thoughts semantically into specific channels of communication. In semantics the impact of language on human thought can be realized, analyzed and understood more clearly than before. The vision of language as a system of independent elements, tide to each other, lies in the roots of structural linguistics is no longer valid always. In functional semantics, language is found to an organized totality in which the various elements are thought of as an interdependent whole showing their significance from the system of the language itself.

الملخص باللغة العربية

أبعاد المعنى ودلالاته في الجملة الانجليزية

من الواضح جداً أن أسلوب علم الدلالة الحديث يختلف عن ما كان عليه سابقاً من حيث أصبح التأكيد على العرض الدلالي أكثر وضوحاً وشمولية. فهذه الورقة محاولة لدراسة التراكيب المؤدية لمعنى

الجملة من حيث أننا نؤمن أن علم الدلالة الحديث يمتاز بتوجيه واضح إلى العلاقة بين وظيفة اللغة وتفكير الإنسان، فالمعتقد السائد أن اللغات البشرية لم تعد آلة للتعبير عن ما يدور في خلد البشر بل العكس من ذلك، فاللغات البشرية تتأثر بالدلالة بحد ذاتها من حيث أنها المسؤولة عن رسم وتأكيد التفكير البشري بالدلالة الواضحة لتُلائم القنوات المختلفة للاتصال البشري. ففي علم الدلالة هذا يعد التفكير الإنساني هو المقصود الأساس وعليه وصفه وتحليله من أجل التوصل إلى كُنهه بدقة متزايدة عن سابقاتها.

فالرؤية الواضحة للغة الإنسانية على أنها نظاماً يحوي مكونات مستقلة ترتبط مع بعضها بروابط ومكونات لغوية تعبيرية لم يعد مسلم به دائماً، ففي علم الدلالة الوظيفية هذا الذي تُستدل به هذه الورقة اللغة ما هي إلا وحدة متكاملة الدلالة تحوي على مركبات لها استقلاليتها التامة ليتضح مفعولها الدلالي في داخل النظام اللغوي للغة المقصودة في الدراسة

The Semantic Discreteness of the Meaning of the Sentence in English

Introduction

Contemporary semantics is primarily characterized by an obvious interest in relation between language and human thinking. Thus human language is no longer regarded as a mere instrument for expressing our thoughts, but as an influence by its own right, which shapes and predetermines and directs them to operate systematically into specific tends and channels of communication. These ideas are not completely new. They were found to operate for same extent fresh and prominent in the theory of semantic fields based on (Ball & Grone, 1997) writings.

Yet, it is in semantics that the impact of language on thought can be seen more clearly, where some promising results have already been achieved, especially in understanding thought.

The vision of language as a system of independent elements, tide to each other, lies in the roots of what has come to be known as structural linguistics'(Roach, 2002).

Visualized language as an organized totality or gestalts in which the various elements are interdependent deriving their significance from the system of the language as a whole. Many structural schools - in Geneva, Prague, Copenhagen, London and elsewhere - came into being (Beverley & Ingers, 2003). All agree on the above fundamental principle although, there are vast differences between them. These newly established schools in Europe has been greatly reinforced by the American school of linguistics founded by Bloomfield (1933) who started from different premises to arrive at similar results.

To us, the main trend in contemporary semantics differs from the previous ones in two vital aspects:

1. It has abandoned the one - sidedly historical orientation of earlier grammarians, since the emphasis is realized on descriptive semantics a number of attempts have been made to study the inner structure of the words.

2. Another important feature of the structural semantics is an obvious shift of interest from general principles to the study of particular languages, which is led to a new classification of Languages on purely semantic grounds.

One may also note the introduction of mathematical methods into semantic procedural understanding. The use of such methods is found to be rather restricted and limited. But some important problems may be well appreciated in this way by showing greater precision than what has been possible so far. In addition, a binary concurrent linguistic relations took place tremendously (Brawn, 1990; Jenkins, 2000).

In the semantic dissolve dissipation and analysis to mark the negligence of the old linear approach to many semantic and syntactic procedural views giving way to the establishment of the semantic -syntactic methods in studying serious problems of meaning (Cruse, 1993). Thus, there can be no doubt that connections between syntax and semantics will help each other greatly since, they have many problems in common even they tend to approach them from different angles. Hence, in the pages that follow, we shall try to present in brief a survey of the cotemporary scene in semantic studies. It will be my Endeavour to give a reasonable account of a fast moving scientific discipline without discarding the results of earlier research papers made in this respect - especially, when the tide of heated discussion on excluding meaning started

(Van,1981). We consider language, in short, as semiotic instrument for conveying meaning. Therefore, it can only be properly understood in terms of semantic multi-functions (Akamatsu, 1986; Al-Badawi, 1997) derived from different terms which are generally viewed in variable structures (syntax) curiously. However, this is precisely how must we study meanings of a given language. (we teach English language at our university, where meaning is obvious, yet regarded marginal activity for the university curricula adopted in our English department, formal syntax grammar still occupies much more central place than semantics).

Aim and Procedures

The general aim of this study is to give a comprehensive information about the status of semantics as a modern branch of linguistics presented in a very consign frame of successive relevant characteristic forms of data about the nature and value of semantics (the nature of the relations between Language and meaning). The focus will be made on the temporal development of the linguistic treatment of the study of the relation of linguistic signs their users and contexts of use, the referential meaning. We shall investigate the value of the signification relation so conceived for the case in which the relevant signs are standard available theories, the objects signified by such signs are their intended models, and the interpretation or understanding the meaning of such signs are the intended characteristics of the performance of the users of these signs of language.

The outline under taken to clarify the idea of the intended model and the relation of the semantic concepts mentioned above using standard logic first then mathematical logic to outline the formal development of the intended model with special reference to English as a natural language. The concept with wider understanding of the meaning realised.

On the bases of multifunctional approach performed to clarify the meaning of a peculiar semantic sign found to operate adequately within inter-related linguistic is question has a purely formal or structural interest as well as logical mathematical one. This kind of logical explanation, of course, in its possible relevance to the problems of semantic, is conceived in such generality in order to achieve stronger semantic appeal.

Sampling Data

In order to deal with the intended multi functional approach to the study of the meaning of a given natural language, simple clear examples are chosen from English, since we have special concern with teaching English semantics at a university level. The following data samples will represent the chosen examples used in the discussion of this study. These samples are chosen perpusively to represent the local standard semantic and grammar meaning usually used in the study of semantics in English which can be applied to the intended multi - functional model performed on the intended word meaning (pure semantic meaning) and phrasal meaning (semantic-syntactic meaning):

I. **Word Meaning** F: # gate #

I. **A: Phrasal Meaning** H: # A gate #

I: # a large gate #

IV: # a large old gate #

V: # a large old painted gate #

I: Bi: # a large old painted gate for the garden #

Bii: # a large old painted gate for the garden of the university #

Biii: # a large old painted gate for the garden of the university in this year #

From the above sampling data of the word meaning we are going to concentrate our discussion on the sample and on (II. B. iii) sample which represent the smallest and largest phrasal meaning in English.

Discussion

In semantics, we move from word meaning (the easiest sample of semantic meaning) towards phrasal meaning. We start with sample No. I the meaning of the selected sample. I is easy to identify count noun, outer large door, yet if it is very difficult to understand the word meaning, which reflects personal information gap. We refer to the use of a dictionary meaning. Besides the triangular theory of meaning is adequate enough to explain any problematic word meaning using the welrnowan. Factors of linguistic sign, brain image and reference, where two different types of semantic relations are identified. But, once we enter in the area of phrasal meaning, as in (II) then, we are confronted by wider semantic meaning where the phrase in English is regarded as a semantic compound meaning. The two different meanings are generally

identified in semantics word meaning and grammatical meaning (syntactic function), which are denoted by semantic - syntax. Hence, to explain the above factors, the example (II. A) # a gate # is understood properly as the semantic word meaning of (a) and (gate) as two different semantic items in addition to the grammatical (function) meaning of an indefinite article plus the meaning of gate as single count noun, large outer door.

This is the minimal simplest phrasal meaning. In English the phrase is, more or less subject to extension. In syntax, the phrasal example (II. A) may be found in literature as many expanded phrasal samples like (II A) and (II B) samples. Thus, we are going to apply the same phrasal semantic concepts to clarify their meanings. Accordingly we choose (II B iii) sample as the largest maximum phrasal meaning in English e. g., # a large old painted gate for the garden of the university in this year #, this is commonly understood as a complex word meaning for all the items found in the construction of such long English phrase. They are described as the word meaning or dictionary meaning (denotation) of each of these fourteen items successively, because they are considered lexical items successively, pieces of one bead. Besides, the grammatical meaning, which can be realized in the following from:

A	large	old	painted	gate	for	the	garden	of	the	university
Def.	Adj1	Adj2	Past	P.N.	Prep	Def. Art	N.	Prep	Def. Art	N.

In	**this**	**year**
↓	↓	↓
Prep	**Dem**	**N.**

Consequently, the phrasal meaning in the above sample is best regarded by its linear totality of both the semantic and grammatical.

The above explanation is fulfilled by common analysis and description, normally made in relevance to English phrasal meaning (noun phrase in here). So far, we do not deny the semantic value of the above explanatory description and analysis in the flield of English semantics yet, the use of common logic to sum up an additional realization of an extra-semantic functions will illustrate the intended interpretation of all the meaning signs signified by such noun phrases in English. This can be showed by the following model of deception, shown within several semantic functions i.e., multifunction,

1. 'a' = indfart. > defining function = D
2. 'new large painted' = adjectives > modifying function.
3. 'gate' = noun > core of the phrasal meaning.
4. 'for the garden, of the university, in this year' = pp + pp2+ pp3 > integrating function.

These different functions have to be added to the previously shown standard model to give rise to the following intended model:

DT I	MT II	CT III	IT IV

I- Defining Function

II- Modifying Function.

III- Core

7- Integral.

The Four Different Semantic Syntactic Functions Of The English Nounphrase

I. **Defining function**: This kind of semantic function is peculiarly realized at the beginning of any English noun phrase. The linguistic signs occupying this function can easily be shown by a special semantic tar

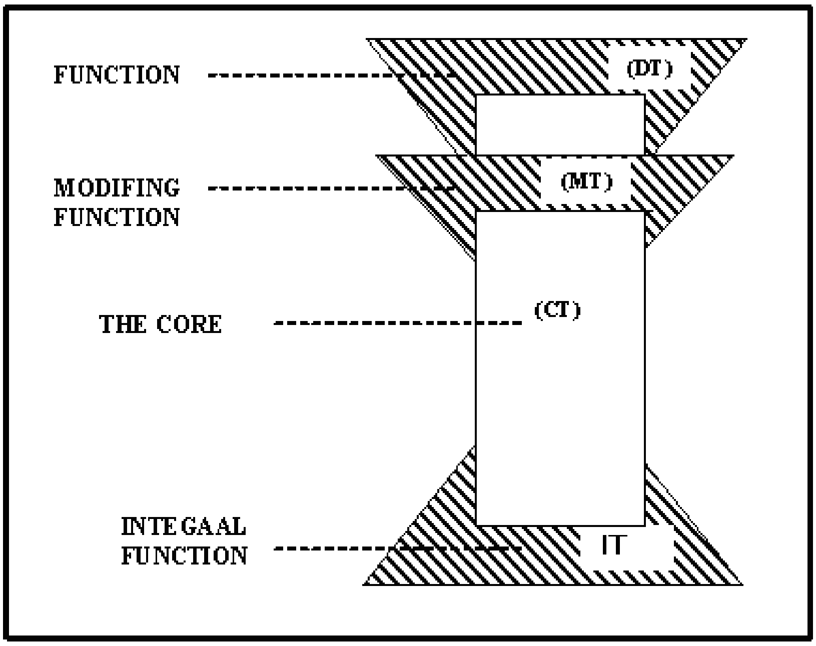
called 'defining function tar' (D T). These linguistic signs are of three semantic categories: I- Articles, 2 -Demonstratives and 3 - Substitutive. Linguistically, all these categories have no tonic force, since sometimes they are pronounced weak and never convey primary stress tonic features. Sometimes, they are given the syntactic value when they are not there.

II. **Modifying Function**: A semantic function usually follows the defining function in the English noun phrase. The linguistic signs fulfill this semantic function are shown within: a special tar of modifying function (M T). These linguist signs are generally syntactic modifiers which are linguistically realized by secondary or weak stresses within their vocalic forms, hence, they are given the syntactic value when they are missing in the structure of the noun phrase.

III. **Focus function or core**: A very important semantic function, which is characterized by obligatory phrase. The linguistic signs occupy this position are nouns of any type: proper, mass, count, uncount. Singular or plural. This important semantic function is given the symbols (C T). The linguistic signs occupy this tar are realized by a dominant primary stress tonic feature, since they normal characterize the read of the tonality of the noun phrase English, they are pronounced strong always.

IV. **Integral function or additional:** A semantic function realized after the core function in the English syntactic structure of the noun phrase. Prepositional phrases ranging between one to three yet sometimes they are given. Existence, when they are missing. They usually follow the tonic level of the core without any peculiar vocalic feature.

The following diagram illustrated the above description of all the semantic - syntactic components found to operate adequately together to characterize the meaning of the English noun phrase used here:



AMULI FUNCTIONL DIAQRM ILLUSTRATING THE SEMANTICO-SYNTATIC COMPONNTS OF THE ENGLSH NOUN PHRASE MEANING

Findings

The usual linear binary explanation of the meaning of the English noun phrase dominated the semantic decipher of the interrelated semantic relations and syntactic structures of the English NP is not bad, since it can be inducted simply and easily in the description and analysis of the meaning of the English NP. Yet it is quite obvious that this kind of explanation is not completely perfect. Many of the exact functions of the different components are kept hidden or sometimes are not overt enough to be realized.

The intended extra functional procedure based on logical interpretation of all the linguistic signs relegate whether the English noun phrase will present a better model of description and analysis.
A multifunctional approach will clarify the semantic and the syntactic,

semantic, syntactic understanding of each linguistic component found in the construction of the English noun phrase functional model representing all the reliable ters of its functions (see the diagram presented above).

We believe that this model is inadequate enough to sum up the meaning of all the linguistic components found within different ters of semantic functions since it is quite easy to describe and understand the semantic - syntactic function of each ter separately. Then they are put together to uncover the exact meaning based on these functions. A certain amount of logic is needed to interpret the real relations between these different ters.

The following implication of multi functional model is on applicable try to show its linguistic value in the area of semantic - syntax. The example of an English noun phrase:

a new large painted gate for the garden of the university in this year # primarily, this example is considered as a maximum type of English noun-phrase which is considered as a maxi difficult if not impossible to interpret its meaning by the use of common linear explanatory description without violation part of its semantic - syntactic relevant factors. It is best presented by the following description: The meaning of the above English noun phrase can be realized by the total meaning of all the linguistic signs construction its formal realization as follows:

a + new + large + painted + gate + for + the + garden + of + the + university + in + this + year +#

Therefore, we need to be familiar with the word meaning of all these words so as to understand their semantic meaning as they are successive semantic units come one after the other linearly.

Whereas the application of the multifunctional model will present completely different realization of the semantico-syntactic meaning of the same example. To accomplish this view we consider the semantic meaning of this English noun phrase as the total interpretation of this phrase realizable within a multi-function describable within different semantico- syntactic ters of functions (see the diagram).

Accordingly, the meaning of this noun is better understood as the total meaning interpreted as separate semantic-syntactic ters concurrently interrelated within one basic ter of the core or focus as follows:

1. The linguistic ter of the core containing the most important semantic meaning. This ter contains the word meaning, of the linguistic sign gate = large outer door.

2. The linguistic ter of the defining function containing one of the artic is or any substitutive linguistic signs which can be found within this ter, as a definite article denoting (one) in relevance to the core in this selected example.

3. The ter of the modifying function realized as one of three modifiers to the word meaning of the core i.e. the meaning of "gate" in this example.

4. Prepositional phrases the semantico- syntactic functions of sativa. Location and temporal meanings describing the meaning of the core by adding same integral meaning to specify the basic meaning core -gate.

Hence the total significant meaning of this noun phrase is primarily of the core which can be given ter (No I) defined within the ter (No. 3) of modification. Thus we are left with the integral meaning contained within ter (No. 4); It is the value of this multi - functional model to reveal that semantic - syntactic description of this English phrase must be best understood as the order

3+1+2+4 arrangement, which can be presented by the computer language of digits as:

1 = o1

2 = o11

3 = o111

4 = o1111

Then, the digital formula if semantic - syntactic meaning of the English noun phrase as it is supposed to be on the basis of the new model will be:

o111 o1 o11 o111

Conclusion:

In brief, this study is a humble try to extend the linear or even binary approach used commonly in the interpretation, larger linguistic unit than the word. The intended model presented in this study can be considered as a step forwards in the study of meaning in general and the value of utilizing semantic-syntactic aspects concurrently functioning within multi-functional ters of semantics leading to improve the common procedures used in this important level of linguistics. The intended model is revealed to be the multi-functions of: core (defining + modifying + Integral) which can be extended to the digital relationship program found in the numerical order of: 3+1+2+4, and not 1+2+3+4. Where the contrast of an apposition will easily reveal the difference.

References:

Akamatsu, T. (1986). "Mark and Related Notions in Brague School" in Historiography Linguistic, XIII (71-83),

Al- Badawi, L. (1997). A functional approach to the study of (STA) unpublished ph.d. thesis; Mosul university, Iraq.

Apresion, Juru, D. (1993). "Systematic lexicology as a basis of Dictionary Marking". dictionaries, vol, 14: pp79- 87, USA.

Bach, E., Jelinck, A., Partte, B. (eds) (1995). "Quantification in Normal Language". Doordrecht: Kluwer.

Ball, M. J.; Grone, B. (1997). "Imagining Techniques". In Ball, & Code, E. (eds.). Instrumental phonetics. London. Whurr: 194- 227.

Beverly Collins & Inger, M. (2003). Practical phonetics and Phonology. Routledge, Taylor and Francis Europe, London.

Bloom field. (1933). "Language", New York, USA.

Brawn, C. (1990). "A Survey of Category Types in Natural language in Meanings Prototypes Studies in linguistics, London: Rout ledge, 22, 57-74.

Bruner, J. (1990). "Acts of Meaning". Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press.

Chomsky, N. (1991). "Linguistics and Cognitive Science Problems of Mystries", in Chomskiqn Turn U, (Ed) Asa Kasher. Cambridge, Mass. Pp. 26-52.

Cruse, D. A. (1993). "Lexical Semantics". Cambridge University Press.

Fillmore, C. I. (1978). "Organization of Semantic Information in the lexicon, "in Robert, I. and Wolfgang, K (eds) Speech plea Action. London: Wiley, pp. 31-59.

Gelmean, S. (1992). "Domain Specificity and the Representation of knowledge", Cambridge, Mass: Bradford Books.

Halmos, P. R. (1962). "Algebraic logic", Chelsea, New York.

Jackenolff, R. (1992). "Languages of the Mind", Cambridge Mass: M I T Press.

Jenkins, J. (2000). The phonology of English. Oxford: Oxford University press.

Ladefoged, R. (2001). Vowels and Consonants: An introduction to the Sounds of Languages. Oxford: Black well.

Land Men, J. (1993). "Grammatical Traces of some Invisible Semanctic", Berlin Mouton de Gruyter.

Martain, R. M. (1978). "Semantics and linguistic Structure", State University of New York press, Al Bany.

Mcshone, I. (1991). "Cognitive Development: An Information Processing Approach", Oxford, Block well.

Roach, P. (2002). A little Encyclopedia of Phonetics, Linguistic Reading. AC. UK.

Sweet, M. A. (1983). "The Pragmatics and Semantics of Standard Languages", The Penney Start University Press.

Ullman, S. (1983). "Semantics: An Introduction to the Science of Meaning". Oxford basil black well.

Van, Frassen, B.M. (1981). 'The Scientific Image", Clarendon Press Oxford.